

**B3 War in Art and Architecture**

**A Critical Anthology**

Guidance on how to work with critical texts page 2

General texts relevant to aspects of the theme

Texts relevant to specified artists

Specified Painters/2D

* Eugene Delacroix (1798-1863)
* Francisco Goya (1746-1828)
* Pablo Picasso (1881-1973)
* Otto Dix (1891-1969)

Specified sculptors/3D

* Antonio Canova (1757-1822)
* Henry Moore (1898-1986)
* Jenny Holzer (1950- )
* Jeremy Deller (1966- )

Specified architects:

* Francois de Mondion (1681-1733)
* Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841)
* Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944)
* Daniel Libeskind (1946- )

**Notes for Approaching Critical Texts in A Level Teaching**

Would recommend breaking this down into three stages:

● Comprehension ● Analysis ● Application

**Comprehension**

The first stage of working with the critical texts might be to ensure that students have a grasp of what the text is saying, as well as information about its production, distribution and reception. Teaching might focus on exploring unfamiliar terminology and extracting the text’s point or argument. In terms of contextualising the text, students might explore who has written it, when and where was it published, and who was its intended audience. If information is known about the text’s reception or impact, that might be helpful too. This kind of information will feed into the next stage of critically analysing it.

**Exercise: Summarise the main argument of the text in no more than three sentences.**

**Exercise: Highlight specific areas of the text that you found difficult to understand. Try to unpack why you found them difficult.**

**Exercise: Pick out one sentence that you feel provides a particularly clear indication of the overall argument. Explain why you have chosen this sentence.**

**Analysis**

This second stage is to encourage students to do more than paraphrase the text but to be able to say something about it and to make connections between it and their chosen art work(s). Reflecting critically about the text might be described as refusing to take it at face value, to assume it’s right/accurate/helpful, so exploring the text *as a piece of writing* - **how has it been researched/argued/structured** - might be useful. Getting them to think about **how helpful is the text in understanding the art work(s)** might also be a good starting point, as well as commenting on similarities and differences between them. On a basic level, the ‘formula’ might go something like: both critical text and art work raise questions about/offer perspectives onto gender/race/class/history/painting/landscape/the artist etc [show evidence of how/if they converge] but…. [and then go on to explore the differences between them].

**Exercise: Highlight all of the ways the text attempts to persuade you of its argument. This should include all the evidence cited, including the work(s) of art discussed (*on which elements of the work does it focus?*). You should also think about the text itself, including the language used and the way it is structured.**

**Exercise: Pick out one sentence that you found particularly persuasive. What, specifically, made it stand out?**

**Exercise: Are you persuaded by the argument? If so, why?**

**Exercise: Can you think of anything that would unsettle some of the claims being made? For instance, are there other ways of thinking about or viewing the work(s) of art discussed? What does the author ignore or overlook?**

**Application**

The final stage seeks to ensure the students know how to engage with the text in their own writing. Do they know the difference between paraphrase and quotation, and how each are referenced to avoid plagiarising the author’s words and ideas? Thinking about how they decide **which parts of the text might make an effective quotation could be useful** (i.e. nothing too long, too bland, too obvious etc). Reminding them that it’s important not to use a quotation to make a point but to make a point about a quotation could be helpful, and links back to the previous stage of demonstrating critical engagement with it. Quotations cannot do all the heavy-lifting in the essay.

**When referring to a text in an essay, students should aim to do all of the above:**

* Outline the relevant part of the argument, potentially including a quote
* Highlight what is persuasive/useful about the critical text – how it can help to illuminate the issues being discussed
* Reflect on the particular strengths and weaknesses of the text by looking at what it uses to substantiate its claims and what it ignores

*Guidance notes kindly provided by the Department of Art History, University of Sussex*

**Requirements for inclusion of critical texts from the Specification and Mark Scheme**

*Candidates are only required to refer to their critical texts in the second 925 mark) question of each Theme section. They may, of course, choose to refer to them in the first, shorter question but this is not required for full credit. The selected critical text(s) must cover the breadth of the theme, and allow students to explore insight into all their chosen specified artists (including their selected architect).*

**Level 1: No relevant reference to critical texts**

**Level 2: Some relevant use of view(s) from critical texts**

**Level 3: Competent use of views from critical texts**

**Level 4: Secure integration of view(s) from critical texts**

**Level 5: Insightful integration of view(s) from critical texts.**

**General critical texts relevant to the theme of War in Art and Architecture (or part thereof)**

From: **Meecham, Pam and Sheldon, Julie**, *Modern Art: A Critical Introduction*, Routledge, 2005 Chapter 3 ‘Monuments, modernism and the public space’ p.p 92-93

**The Counter-Monument**

Other memorial monuments to the Jewish people have raised the spectre of remembered loss. It seems that public mourning and the commemoration of the recent past are as problematic as the debate around what form the monument should take. To portray the Holocaust abstractly – the preferred option of Richard Serra’s and the architect Peter Eisenman’s design of a colossal ‘garden’ of stone pillars (in Berlin) – raises issues around the need to mourn or commemorate within a perceived realism. Although many of the memorials to the First World War contain figures, few artists attempting to work with the Holocaust have chosen anthropomorphic monuments, despite hostility of the idea of ‘abstracted’ mourning.

Christian Boltanski’s *Missing House* registers that which was ‘lost’ as an imagined space. The delays in the completion of Rachel Whiteread’s memorial to the Jews, *The Nameless Library*, built on the Judenplatz in Vienna has proved equally labyrinthine in concept and execution. Now constructed, Rachel Whiteread’s work comprises 266 square metres of concrete – a white rectangle. The sides of the structure contain impressions of thousands of books, and embed in the structure are the names of the concentration camps where Jews were interred in the Second World War. Whiteread’s monument The Nameless Library is built close to Or Sarua Synagogue as a memorial to over 65,000 Austrian Jews who died as a result of Nazi persecution. Its position in the Judenplatz is not unproblematic, as the architectural integrity of the original square is broken by the sheer scale of the building. However, it can be argued that, like [Horst] Hoheisel’s negative form monument [*Monument to the Aschrott-Brunnen*, 1987, Kassel], its power lies in its refusal to offer comfort.

The commemoration of specific cultural groups, often sub-cultures or groups outside the dominant class, is a preoccupation of many contemporary artists. Whiteread’s (Untitled) House was a memorial to another community, in this case, the relocated working class population of Bow in the East End of London. The internal spaces of the empty house were filled with light-grey concrete and the exterior walls of the terraced house were removed, leaving a ghostly reminder of the private space of a family home. Never conceived as permanent, House was demolished after a single casting vote by Bow Neighbourhood Councillors, who then ordered its demolition. *(Untitled) House* and *The Nameless Library* can be seen as part of what has been characterised as a melancholic postmodern ‘sense of loss’. In her casts and imprints Whiteread fashions the presence of an absence. The monument to the European Jews ‘lost’ in the Holocaust also bears witness to their loss. Although problematic and a cliché of learning, the debates that fuel the controversy over what constitutes a suitable moment to lost communities are likely to be the lasting legacy.

These examples illustrate a major debate in twentieth-century cultural practice: what kinds of monuments can be built and, more crucially, what forms can they take?

**Mark Godfrey:** Response to *October* questionnaire: In What Ways Have Artists, Academics, and Cultural Institutions Responded to the U.S.-Led Invasion and Occupation of Iraq? *October,* Vol. 123, Winter 2008, pp. 67-70

*(Includes discussion of Steve McQueen’s For Queen and Country)*

The events leading up to the current war - and the war itself - could be characterized, insofar as visual representation is concerned, in terms of spectacular visibility and near invisibility. While September 11 was planned as a visual spectacle, one then replayed on TV screens and pictured on front pages, deaths of American or British soldiers are never pictured, less still the calamities befalling Iraqi citizens. The war is perpetuated in part by keeping some images present in the memory and by consigning others to obscurity and oblivion. Some of the most compelling artistic responses to the war have addressed this dynamic of visibility and invisibility.

On the one hand, artists have found ways to make visible what governments and news corporations prefer to render unseen. In a number of recent installations, Thomas Hirschhorn has papered walls with horrific pictures downloaded from the Web and pushes viewers into constricted spaces to face these images mangled Iraqi and American bodies. Less graphic, but no less powerful images have made their way into Martha Rosler's new series of collages: here again, as her Vietnam-era series *Bringing the War Home*, Rosier takes magazine adverts and interrupts comfortable consumer scenes with shots of the war. Mark Wallinger responded to the British government's attempt to render invisible (in the immediate vicinity of Parliament) the protest placards of Brian Haw by fabricating replica and displaying it in Tate Britain on the border of the exclusion zone circling Westminster. Jeremy Deller, in his contribution to an *Artforum* portfolio on the subject (September 2004), made an economical textual work invoking but not showing a well-known but now rarely printed photograph: that of Donald Rumsfeld shaking Saddam Hussein's hand in 1983.

Other artists have dramatized the problems of the urge to render visible places and cultures involved with the war. In 2003, Marine Hugonnier produced the film *Ariana*, which presents itself as a record of a trip to Afghanistan, a trip motivated by the desire to produce a panoramic film there. According to its fractured narrative, Hugonnier twice attempted to find a pinnacle from which to make a 360-degree panning shot, but in both instances recognized that to do would be to assume a questionable power over the people and landscape surveyed. The film she ended up making is a document of the failure of the film intended to produce. Hugonnier was one of the first artists to travel to the countries targeted in the "war on terror," and the first to recognize that to produce, package, and then display an image of these countries was in some way to align oneself with the ideology of the invading forces.

There have also been responses to the war in Iraq that make visible previously unrecognized links between current and historical conditions. For instance, filming over Ground Zero in his work Muhheakantuck - *Everything Has a Name* (2004), Matthew Buckingham prompted his viewers to consider the attack on the World Trade Center in connection with the much earlier carnage wrought on the same area by Europeans, including Henry Hudson …

But what is it to speak of the efficacy of these practices, the last two of which would barely be recognized as even addressing the war? If all have the potential to make their viewers think in more nuanced ways about the war in Iraq, its (non)representation, and its historical connections, few would claim to be able to effect change in government policy. Personally speaking, I have reluctantly accepted this situation, choosing to teach and write about these projects, while holding out little hope for their concrete “efficacy” (this, perhaps, is a result of my “professionalization”). But at times one is struck by the gulf between the ambition and mode of reception of art that addresses the war on Iraq. This summer, I saw Thomas Demand’s new series *Yellowcake* (2007) for the first time. The series concerns the Niger Embassy in Rome, a site connected to documents that George Bush used as a pretext to claim that Iraq was attempting to produce nuclear weapons. The documents turned out to have been faked on paper stolen from the embassy. No pictures of the embassy had been published before: Demand managed to access the building, and created paper models of it which he then photographed. The exhibition was organized in Venice by the Prada Foundation. At the opening, I exited the gallery and emerged onto the canal side. Surrounded by art world friends, with sunset in my eyes, and Prosecco in my hand, to discuss the political sharpness of Demand’s series – the way in which the work involved paper and deception on both a thematic and formal level – seemed absurd. This is neither to slate the artist for showing his work in this context, nor to chastise myself for enjoying an art opening, but to acknowledge that the setting in which critical art is shown can dampen even the prospect of any “efficacy”….

Even more tricky than addressing the deaths in New York and elsewhere is for an artist to make a project about commemoration of "the glorious dead", since historically, commemoration of “the glorious dead” tends to have gone hand-in-hand with hypernationalism and victorious celebration. Steve McQueen’s project *For* Queen and Country is particularly remarkable not just for taking on this subject, but because it addresses and is structured by the dynamic of visibility and invisibility I mentioned before. Working with their families, McQueen has produced uncut sheets of stamps bearing photographs of British soldiers killed in Iraq since the beginning of the war. These stamps are currently displayed in vertical drawers that can be pulled out of a cabinet, each drawer having a recto and a verso McQueen makes visible the faces of the dead (images that tend to be kept invisible by our newspapers), but the cabinet's structure means that these faces remain invisible until the viewer decides to pull each drawer out; each viewer is thus made responsible for deciding whether to make each dead soldier appear. As each sheet of 168 identical, uncut stamps is pulled out, one compares the visible, banal snapshot of smiling, living soldiers with the unseen images of their deaths, of their bereaved families, all the while thinking of the absent images of the invisible dead of Iraq.

As I looked through the cabinet, the first drawers I removed had sheets of stamps o both sides, but then I pulled out a drawer to find it blank. No image was visible here, but the space will doubtless be filled in with a new sheet of stamps of yet-to-be-killed soldiers. Visibility and invisibility are also at stake in the fate of the project as a whole. For now it is a sculptural and photographic art work tucked away in a corner of the Imperial War Museum in London, but it is intended that the stamps will cease being prototypes and enter proper circulation, a proposal that has been the subject of political debate. Above each face is a small profile of the Queen, as on all British stamps, the nominal figure for whom the soldiers died. Despite this reminder of “Queen and Country” and of the patriotism that would have inspired each soldier to serve, the project is not in the least bit nationalistic, for whether in the cut girds or on envelopes, the tiny faces appear as so many victims, not as the enlarged heroes of traditional war memories. And yet nothing about the work is disrespectful, nothing mocks the soldiers’ beliefs: families have found it a fitting tribute, and one that would be more potent if the stamps are actually put to use. Many constituencies who actively support the war could respect McQueen’s project, but those who wish to detect opposition might locate in it a simple idea: finding a way to honor the soldiers without inflated nationalist sentiment is also a way to suggest the barbarity of the war that killed them. Perhaps only by representing in this way the deaths of those whom our governments require to serve can artists make opposition to the war more effective.

**John Glaves-Smith: Realism and Propaganda in the Work of Charles Sargeant Jagger and their Relationship to Artistic Tradition,** pp.75-78. (From:Ann Compton (Ed) (1985) War and Peace Sculpture: Charles Sargeant Jagger, 1st edn., London: Imperial War Museum)

Jagger’s interest in the minutiae of weaponry and other equipment reaches its apogee in the Artillery Memorial. The howitzer itself was a bone of contention, not merely for Derwent Wood, but also for critical comment after the unveiling. The Times, for instance, discussed the distance between the gunner’s view and that of the public.[[1]](#footnote-1) The special connotation of how the howitzer is emphasised by comparison with certain paintings of the war. Depictions by the modernist painters Wyndham Lewis and Nevinson dehumanise the soldier by using a cubistic stylisation as an analogy for the mechanisation of war. In certain work by Jagger, for example the reliefs in the National Army Museum (c.1928), which have a more decorative function and, to a lesser extent, those for the Tank Memorial at Louverval (1927-28), there is a depersonalising stylisation which derives from the more functionalist aspects of his training. This element of dehumanisation was given an overtly satirical twist by the conscientious objector Mark Gertler in the Merry-Go-Round (1916) in which the military and war-supporting civilians are depicted as dolls. In the Artillery Memorial the way that the very precision of technical detail overlays and is therefore separable from the figure suggests a humanity under the mechanised surface. The implication is a sign for war distinct from both traditionalist and modernist representations. A key phrase could be ‘war as labour’. Ultimately flesh, muscle and bones are not steel: the gap has to be bridged by the depiction of human effort.

‘Men become reminiscent and talkative as they look at the figure carrying four 18-pound shells in the long pockets of his coat. He would perhaps carry them long distance, they said, if the gun was camouflaged, and like as not he would have two more under his arms. It meant a great weight added to the 96 pounds of artillery man’s equipment.’[[2]](#footnote-2)

It is significant that R.H.Wilenski evoked Brangwyn in comparison to Jagger.[[3]](#footnote-3) Frank Brangwyn was an artist particularly associated with robust depictions of physical labour and moreover one who during the war had made posters equating the efforts of warrior and worker. If the Artillery Memorial ‘brings home’ the experience of the Great war it is through this link with general civilian life, as well as its historical particularity.

***Further suggestions with links:***

* ***Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory,*** Marianne Hirsch, 2001, Yale University and The Johns Hopkins University Press
* <http://www.lorienovak.com/pdfs/Hirsch_surviving_images.pdf>
* ***The Artist and the Terrorist, or The Paintable and the Unpaintable: Gerhard Richter and the Baader-Meinhof Group.*** Alex Danchev, Alternatives: Global, Local, Political, Vol. 35, No. 2 (Apr-June 2010), pp. 93-112 Published by: Sage Publications, Inc.
* <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40645289?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents>
* ***Liberty Leading the People, 1830, Painting by Eugene Delacroix,*** Simon Lee, Routledge. <http://cw.routledge.com/ref/romanticera/liberty.pdf>

**Specified artist: Delacroix**

**Areti Devetzidis** *Revolution, Death, Transformation and Art: Delacroix’s Scenes from the Massacres at Chios*, 2013, Journal of Modern Greek Studies - Special Issue, pp209-220.

<https://dspace.flinders.edu.au/xmlui/bitstream/handle/2328/26845/Revolution%20Death.pdf?sequence=1>

*Dualities and culture wars*

Delacroix’s personal philosophy in the 1820s was based on a view of the world struggling between opposing moral values; evil versus good, intelligence versus savagery, civilisation versus barbarity. Delacroix’s “...characteristic duality of theoretical procedure [is evident] ... in his ability to appreciate the contrasting virtues of both Ancient and modern art...” (Mras, 1966:62), and to integrate them in the execution of his painting. In the *Scio*, dualities are portrayed in a scenario depicting the consequences of war without reference to glory. On the one hand, in the minds of Europeans, the war represented the struggle between Christianity and Islam, between civilisation and barbarity, between good and evil. Delacroix, commented Haskell, “was embarking on something quite new in art...there were no real precedents for the large-scale painting of contemporary brutalities…”[[4]](#footnote-4) adding, “why the picture proved to be of such overriding importance was that its break with conventional drawing and composition confirmed ... the existence of a new school of French painting which was at once called Romantic and which attracted to it a great many talented young artists. Hanging in the same exhibition”[[5]](#footnote-5)... was Ingres’s ‘Vows of Louis XIII’.

And this made it seem that French painting was divided into two great rival and opposing schools,

and that critics, the public, and artists would be forced to choose between them”.[[6]](#footnote-6) Delacroix’s brilliant use of colour, his focus on contour to define form (Wellington, 1995:25), his dynamic drawing, and the emotional content of his painting refer back to Leonardo, Michelangelo, Rubens and the Venetian painters. His great rival Ingres believed that the ancients Greeks and the Romans had already achieved perfection in art and there was no need for artists to look elsewhere. Delacroix’s, use of flamboyant colours and his turbulent composition were considered heretical. Ingres believed that colour appealed only to the uneducated, the vulgar mob.[[7]](#footnote-7) Conversely Delacroix believed that beauty was found in many forms. The conflict between the Rubenistes

and Poussinistes, while superficially an argument about technique and visual matters, that is, drawing versus colour, calm versus movement, sharply focused action on a few figures versus scattered crowds — was in essence a struggle between stasis and change. Delacroix’s romanticism drew him to subject matter that expressed the extremes of the human condition, the romantic agony, the darkest extremes of suffering and pain. He was driven by passionate intensity, a burning imagination, and ambition. Like his hero Michelangelo, Delacroix was inclined to dwell on images of dread (Néret, 1999:7). Baudelaire wrote: “his work contains nothing but devastation, massacres, conflagrations; everything bears witness against the eternal and incorrigible barbarity of man. Burnt and smoking cities, slaughtered victims, ravished women, the very children cast

beneath the hooves of horses or menaced by the dagger of a distracted mother — this whole body of this painter’s works, I say, is a hymn composed in honour of destiny and irremediable anguish” (Baudelaire, 1964:59). The *Scio* embodies all of Baudelaire’s aforementioned themes. The strongest binary embodied in the *Scio* is the tension between East and West. Philhellenic passion was inflamed by a new crusade, to rescue the Greeks from the Turks, Christians against Moslems, civilisation against barbarity.

In 1838 Delacroix would paint Médée Furieuse, an image of “children ... menaced by the dagger of a distracted mother” (Baudelaire, 1964:59), also a work of universal and eternal significance. The Greek War of Independence was seen as a holy war, yet in the painting Delacroix’s fetish for oriental exoticism dominates, in the sensuous execution of ornaments, weapons, and drapery. By comparing the *Scio* to many works on similar themes from the period however, Haskell shows that Delacroix managed to avoid the pitfalls of his time, particularly its sentimentality and gratuitous voyeurism. His view is that Delacroix’s work reveals a rare genuineness of response to monstrous events, that next to the work of many other artists of the time he exclaims how “nervously ‘modern’ ...[*Scio*] actually was in its own day” [[8]](#footnote-8). In that painting Delacroix depicts pain, suffering, defeat and desolation with the authority and dignity of a religious work by Raphael or Michelangelo. ‘Scenes from the Massacres at Chios’ by Eugène Delacroix, is a symbol of suffering and oppression in the struggle for freedom and self-determination. Death is ubiquitous in the history of modern Greece, and there seems little respite from it even today. The scale of the casualties suffered by Greeks from the War of Independence and in subsequent struggles for sovereignty is staggering, taking into account the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913, the disastrous campaign in Asia Minor in 1822, the dispossession of around two million Greeks in the process of which many thousands perished from persecution, disease and starvation. It has been argued in this paper, that the personal life of the artist Delacroix, also marked by the deaths and subsequent loss of status and social humiliation of many of his loved ones, coupled with the Romantic zeitgeist of that time, and anti-Islamic sentiment, disposed him to sympathise with the Greek cause. As Jobert points out, “The only event of his time that truly attracted his interest ... was the struggle of the Greeks against the Turks ... his continuing enthusiasm for the Greek struggle never stopped translating itself into his work” (Jobert, 1998:120).

**Specified artist: Goya**

**Susan Sontag***Regarding the Pain of Others*, 2003, Picador. pp35-38.

The practice of representing atrocious suffering as something to be deplored, and, if possible, stopped, enters the history of images with a specific subject: the sufferings endured by a civilian population at the hands of a victorious army on the rampage. It is a quintessentially secular subject, which emerges in the seventeenth century, when contemporary realignments of power become material for artists. In 1633 Jacques Callot published a suite of eighteen etchings titled *Les Miseres et les Malheurs de la Guerre (The Miseries and Misfortunes of War)*, which depicted the atrocities committed against civilians by French troops during the invasion and occupation of his native Lorraine in the early 1630s. (Six small etchings on the same subject that Callot had executed prior to the large series appeared in 1635, the year of his death.) The view is wide and deep; these are large scenes with many figures, scenes from a history, and each caption is a sententious comment in verse on the various energies and dooms portrayed in the images. Callot begins with a plate showing the recruitment of soldiers; brings into view ferocious combat, massacre, pillage, and rape, the engines of torture and execution (strappado, gallows tree, firing squad, stake, wheel), the revenge of the peasants on the soldiers; and ends with a distribution of rewards. The insistence in plate after plate on the savagery of a conquering army is startling and without precedent, but the French soldiers are only the leading malefactors in the orgy of violence, and there is room in Callot's Christian humanist sensibility not just to mourn the end of the independent Duchy of Lorraine but to record the postwar plight of destitute soldiers who squat on the side of a road begging for alms.

Callot had his successors, such as Hans Ulrich Franck, a minor German artist, who, in 1643, toward the end of the Thirty Years' War, began making what would amount to (by 1656) twenty-five etchings depicting soldiers killing peasants. But the preeminent concentration on the horrors of war and the vileness of soldiers run amok is Goya's, in the early nineteenth century. *Los Desastres de la Guerra (The Disasters of War)*, a numbered sequence of eighty-three etchings made between 1810 and 1820 (and first published, all but three plates, in 1863, thirty-five years after his death), depicts the atrocities perpetrated by Napoleon's soldiers who invaded Spain in 1808 to quell the insurrection against French rule. Goya's images move the viewer close to the horror. All the trappings of the spectacular have been eliminated: the landscape is an atmosphere, a darkness, barely sketched in. War is not a spectacle. And Goya's print series is not a narrative: each image, captioned with a brief phrase lamenting the wickedness of the invaders and the monstrousness of the suffering they inflicted, stands independently of the others. The cumulative effect is devastating.

The ghoulish cruelties in *The Disasters of War* are meant to awaken, shock, wound the viewer. Goya's art, like Dostoyevsky's. seems a turning point in the history of moral feelings and of sorrow—as deep, as original, as demanding. With Goya, a new standard for responsiveness to suffering enters art. (And new subjects for fellow-feeling: as in, for example, his painting of an injured labourer being carried away from a building site.) The account of war's cruelties is fashioned as an assault on the sensibility of the viewer. The expressive phrases in script below each image comment on the provocation. While the image, like every image, is an invitation to look, the caption, more often than not, insists on the difficulty of doing just that. A voice, presumably the artist's, badgers the viewer: can you bear to look at this? One caption declares: *One can't look (Mo se puede mirar)*. Another says: *This is bad (Esto es malo)*. Another retorts: *This is worse (Esto es peor)*. Another shouts: *This is the worst! (Esto es lo peor!)*. Another declaims: *Barbarians! (Bdrbaros!). What madness! (Que locuraf)*, cries another. And another: *This is too much! (Fuerte cosa es!)*. And another: *Why? (Por que?)*.

The caption of a photograph is traditionally neutral informative: a date, a place, names. A reconnaissance photograph from the First World War (the first war in which cameras were used extensively for military intelligence) was unlikely to be captioned *"Can't wait to overrun this!"* or the X-ray of a multiple fracture to be annotated *"Patient will probably have a limp!"* Nor should there be a need to speak for the photograph in the photographer's voice, offering assurances of the image's veracity, as Goya does in The Disasters of War, writing beneath one image: *I saw this (To lo vi).* And beneath another: *This is the truth (Esto es lo verdadero)*. Of course the photographer saw it.

And unless there's been some tampering or misrepresenting, it is the truth.

Ordinary language fixes the difference between handmade images like Goya's and photographs by the convention that artists "make" drawings and paintings while photographers "take" photographs. But the photographic image, even to the extent that it is a trace (not a construction made out of disparate photographic traces), cannot be simply a transparency of something that happened. It is always the image that someone chose; to photograph is to frame, and to frame is to exclude. Moreover, fiddling with pictures long antedates the era of digital photography and Photoshop manipulations: it has always been possible for a photograph to misrepresent. A painting or drawing is judged a fake when it turns out not to be by the artist to whom it had been attributed. A photograph—or a filmed document available on television or the internet—is judged a fake when it turns out to be deceiving the viewer about the scene it purports to depict.

That the atrocities perpetrated by the French soldiers in Spain didn't happen exactly as pictured—say, that the victim didn't look just so, that it didn't happen next to a tree—hardly disqualifies ‘*The Disasters of War*’. Goya's images are a synthesis. They claim: things like this happened.

**Specified artist: Picasso**

**T. J. Clark** (2013) *Picasso and Truth: From Cubism to Guernica*, Princeton: Princeton University Press. *Extract*, pp. 240-242.

*Guernica* is a painting in oil on canvas. measuring 139 by 307 inches: twenty-five and a half feet long, and more than eleven and a half feet high. It was first shown to the public at large in July 1937, in the entrance hall of the Spanish Republic’s Pavilion at the Paris World Fair. It was a mural. The painting did not exactly fit the space reserved for it, but clearly Picasso has sized up the entryway’s dimensions and mulled over the architect’s plans. On the opposite side of the entry, facing *Guernica* and filing the wall, was pasted a blown-up photo of Garcia Lorca “poète fusillé à Grenade.” In between the two stood a death-deerling fountain by Alexander Calder, with runnels of mercury falling into a pool. (Mercury was a key Spanish export.) Out past the steel pillars of the inner courtyard was a cinema set up under a flimsy ceiling, showing films of the Civil War. Luis Bunuel was in charge.

 *Guemica* is a picture of an air raid. On 26 April 19 37. in the tenth month of the war in Spain, the ancient town of Guernica, for centuries the focus of Basque identity, had been attacked by a squadron of Luftwaffe bombers supplemented by a handful of planes from Mussolini. The aim was to bomb and burn the city center in its entirety. It was the Luftwaffe's chance to see what the new incendiary explosives were capable of, to judge how long it would take to turn a town into an ash heap, and what the effect of so doing would be on "civilian morale." (This last euphemism became the currency of cabinet rooms.) In this sense, Guernica was inaugural. It ushered in the last century's, and our century's, War of Terror-terror largely administered by the state-in which tens of millions would die.

Unsurprisingly, Franco and the Luftwaffe took pains to conceal what had been done and by whom, though almost at once there were reliable reports from the ruins. A propaganda war followed. The Fascists spread the story that Guernica had been burned by Basque Communists, or perhaps an anarchist shock brigade. in retreat. Pillars of rectitude like T. S. Eliot were inclined to believe them. Picasso made his first sketches toward a picture of the bombing on May Day in Paris, five days after the raid. He appears to have begun work on the canvas itself about ten days later: the first photograph his companion Dora Maar took of the work in progress is dated II May. We can be fairly sure, from dated sketches done in conjunction with last-minute changes on the canvas, that the painting reached its final form on 4 June or very soon after. From first sketch to finished painting, that is, Picasso took just over five weeks; from the moment he began work on the full-size canvas, maybe twenty-six days.

**T J Clark** Extract taken from Picasso and Truth : from Cubism to Guernica. Lecture 6 – Mural. P248-250

Picasso himself rarely talked about pictures he had done, nor should we expect him to. He made a few offhand remarks about *Guernica* in retrospect, one or two of which I have already quoted. He tried – but of course failed – to head off the iconographers, and insisted that a bull is a bull. (I shall follow his lead in this.) But there is one moment, I feel, in which he says something worth thinking about. Two moments, actually: both Malraux and Gilot report essentially the same conversation. It has to do not directly with *Guernica*, but with Goya’s *Third of May 1808.* Naturally in talking about the one he knew he was talking about the other. Malraux reports the exchange as specifically happening in 1937, just before *Guernica* went off to the Spanish pavilion. Probably an artefact, this dating, but the connection is clear. The dark sky in the *Third of May,* says Picasso,

is not a sky, it is just blackness. The light takes two forms. One of which we do not understand. It bathes everything, like moonlight: the sierra, the bell-tower, the firing squad, which ought to be lit only from behind. But it is much brighter than the moon. It isn’t the color of moonlight. And then there is the enormous lantern on the ground, in the center. That lantern, what does it illuminate? The fellow with upraised arms, the martyr. You look carefully: its light falls only on him. The lantern is Death. Why? We don’t know. Nor did Goya. But Goya, he knew it had to be like that.

Compare Malraux with Gilot. Goya in the *Third of May,* she remembers Picasso saying (for some reason this passage occurs only in her book’s French edition),

truly places us in “the time of death.” All the elements in the picture are chosen and placed in a hierarchy, deriving from that enormous square lantern, placed on the ground in the center of the canvas like the light of eternity.

One may well distrust the detail here. “Phare d’éternité” sounds more Gilot than Picasso. But I am interested in what the two reminiscences share: the idea that the task of this kind of history painting turns on its *placing* the viewer in a time of death, and that the way to this placement lies in a kind of light. I would go further. The light that makes Death appear in a painting is not a general illumination – not the weird everywhereness of Goya’s more-than-moonlight – but light placed on the ground, given a shape and a size. The lamp in *Third of May* is enormous (the word occurs in both memoirs), and it is square. My intuition is that it is the specific crude objectivity given to light that Picasso most admires. “The lantern is Death. Why? We don’t know.” Maybe because its unlovely geometry anchors, but also contradicts, the heavy flow of embodiment all round it. It stands apart from the agony. It is a house – an abstraction of shelter – a tomb.

Incidentally, this is not the only time that Picasso talks about the idea of death being crystallized in an object. Remember the question to Malraux: “When I paint a woman in an armchair, the armchair, it’s old age and death, isn’t it?” Not that the “*x* and *y*” in this case (the single figure, the ominous piece of furniture) gets us close to what happens in *Guernica.* Critics who go on looking for death specifically in the lamp-bulb sun or the bull’s head or the fallen warrior are trying to turn the picture into an easel painting: they are forgetting the impact – the overload of stimuli – that comes from *Guernica’*s actual size. Death is not localized in *Guernica*: it is everywhere and nowhere: that is the picture’s main point. Everywhere and nowhere, but manifest – materialized – as a kind of illumination. Which exactly does not mean appearing as ambience or effulgence (a new moonlight): the flash of a bomb-blast is the hardest, most finite thing imaginable. It is specific as the twist of tungsten in a sixty-watt bulb. That is what had to be learnt from Goya.

**Specified artist: Dix**

**Otto Dix**, *interviewed in the 1960s. Quoted in Otto Dix, by Eva Karcher, Taschen 1988*

*Reasons for painting war imagery after the war, when it was not popular.*

People were already beginning to forget, what horrible suffering the war had brought them. I did not want to cause fear and panic, but to let people know how dreadful war is and so to stimulate people's powers of resistance.
Lice, rats, barbed wire entanglements, fleas, grenades, bombs, caves corpses, blood, drink, mice, cats, gases, cannons, filth, bullets, machine guns, fire, steel. That’s what war is! Nothing but the devil’s work!

**Otto Dix**, *a diary entry from 1915-16, quoted in Otto Dix, by Eva Karcher, Taschen 1988*

With a handful of notable exceptions, the visual culture of the Weimar Republic eschewed the representation of war, which could not be reconciled to notions of modernity. Dix’s work showed what artistic imagination could do with images of the war. Dix himself saw action on the battlefield, and his initial utopian enthusiasm for war was shaken by his experience. Shortly after the war, his Skat Players (1920, Stuttgart, Stadtgalerie) used the savage mutilations suffered by war veterans to make a bitter comment about the indifference of society to the effects of its military technology. His horrifying series of etchings War (1923), and his painting of The Trench (1920-23) equally dealt upon the misery and suffering of the war. But Dix was an exception. Images of war were less common in visual culture than views of city life and the new woman.

**Shearer West** *The Visual Arts in Germany 1890-1937: Utopia and Despair*, MUP 2000, p.176.

*An example of incorporating a critical text for Dix’s Self Portraits:*

*Dix took two books to the Western Front: the Bible and Nietzsche. His Nietzschean ideals are still intact in his 1915 picture* Self Portrait as Mars *(Freital, Haus der Heimat) where he goes one step further by painting himself as an immortal, completely immune and incorruptible from the ravages of war. He saw himself as Nietzsche’s ‘superman’, a concept introduced in Thus Spoke Zarathrustra’s Prologue where Nietzsche writes “one must have chaos within one, to give birth to a dancing star” and Dix shows himself surrounded by dancing points of light.*

**A Murray** 2012. *Reformed masculinity: trauma, soldierhood and society in Otto Dix’s War Cripples and Prague Street.* *Artefact: Journal of the Irish Association of Art Historians. 6, pp. 16-31. http://artefactjournal.com/*

Dix’s work records one of the major challenges faced by defeated soldiers, that of their perceived failure to emulate the German ideal of masculinity, which would have life changing consequences for many ex-soldiers.

…working-class Dix was sensitive towards the treatment of soldiers of the same social strata, whose fate was strongly influenced by their social background: the working class soldier most often experienced the bloodiest battles first-hand and was thus more exposed to physical and mental injury. However, in the so-called ‘pension wars’ of the immediate post-war period, both the extent of their suffering and the nature of their injuries was disputed.

Dix’s images of disabled veterans were highly confrontational to a culture that evidently found the traditional model of masculinity more digestible: not surprising, considering that this model functioned to promote an image of national strength and indestructibility.

…while generally representative of an altered if not destroyed masculinity, this figure also represents the working-class veteran forced into destitution by the system and the Jewish veteran who came to be vilified through racial tensions that emerged during the post-war years.

**Specified artist: Canova**

**Michelle Facos, *An Introduction to Nineteenth-Century Art*, Routledge 2011, p.62-3.**

**Neoclassicism made ridiculous**

Resorting to classical models was no guarantee of an ennobling result; indeed, it could have the opposite effect. While the guise of a toga-wearing Roman emperor might convey authority and dignity, the guise of a nude Greek hero could appear unflattering and ridiculous. Napoleon understandably detested the one attempt at casting him in the role of an ancient hero – Antonio Canova’s Napoleon as Mars the Peacemaker (1806, Figure 3.7). Napoleon admired the renowned Neoclassical sculptor. When he conquered Canova’s native Venice in 1797, cutting off Canova’s salary (paid by the Republic of Venice), the general wrote a flattering letter to Canova offering to replace the income. Although angered by Napoleon’s conquest, Canova accepted the money. In 1802, Napoleon forced Canova to come to Paris by making diplomatic threats to Pope Pius VII. Although Canova made a widely copied portrait bust of Napoleon, the emperor wanted a life-size statue. Napoleon requested one in uniform, but Canova produced a nude portrait, a decision endorsed by Napoleon’s artistic advisor, Vivant Denon. Canova left no record of his motives, but one might wonder if he wanted to embarrass the blading, paunchy emperor while remaining true to his practice of producing timeless, classically influenced sculptures. While Roman emperors were never represented in the nude, Greek heroes and gods were, and Napoleon as Mars (Roman god of war) is reminiscent of The Spearbearer, ancient copies of which existed in several Roman collections. Canova’s title can be interpreted in at least two ways: ironic condemnation of the imperialistic war-mongerer, or realistic acknowledgement of military victory as the means to peace.

Despite the sculpture’s aesthetic beauty, Napoleon placed it in a closet, fearful of the ridicule it might elicit. In 1815, French King Louis XVIII sold it to the British government, which in turn awarded it to General Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, in appreciation of his defeat of the French at Waterloo. Today it stands in the stairwell of Apsley House, Wellington’s London residence. Although nudity in sculpture was associated with universality, antiquity, timelessness, and heroism, the reality of a nude contemporary person evoked then, as it would now, feelings of vulnerability, embarrassment, or even humor, none of which conformed to the image Napoleon wanted to project.

**Christopher M. S. Johns, Portrait Mythology: Antonio Canova's Portraits of the Bonapartes**

**Eighteenth-Century Studies Vol. 28, No. 1 (Autumn, 1994), p.119**

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Portraits form a very small percentage of the sculptor’s prodigious production, and mythologised portraits are a small minority even of these. Why, then, are his best-known Bonapartist portraits executed in mythological guise? Or might not “disguise” be a more accurate description?

The traditional response to this question has been that in making portraits with a mythological referent, Canova was attempting to elevate the work beyond portraiture to approach the more exalted excellencies of history. The desire to elevate portraiture in this manner is seen to advantage in the work of many of Canova’s contemporaries, a good example being Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose *Lady Sarah Bunbury Sacrificing To The Three Graces* is intentionally suggestive of mythology. […] As the demand for portraits increased dramatically almost everywhere in Europe during the eighteenth century, and as portrait artists predictably rose in social status and professional visibility, it became increasingly difficult to reconcile academic belief in the relative inferiority of portraiture with the financial success and increasing public reputation enjoyed by its practitioners. This is what led to academic attempts to impose price ceilings on portraits, strictures designed to maintain the hegemony of history. Despite persisting prejudice, such artists as Rosalba Carriera, Pompeo Batoni, Jean-Marc Nattier, and Thomas Gainsborough, to mention only a few, rose to positions of prominence in the academic system; all were primarily, if not exclusively, portrait painters. Such career paths would have been all but impossible for portrait specialists of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Portrait mythology, then, was not only a compromise with the hierarchy of the genres but was also an assertion of the inventive capacities and new-found confidence of portraitists. But to return to the main question: Was the elevation of portraiture a central tenet of Canova’s agenda when he selected a mythological premise for his portrait statues of Napoleon and Pauline? There is much evidence to indicate that it was not. I believe that Canova’s reasons were essentially political, a motivation that places him into a different context from the majority of artists working in the mythological portrait genre.

**Specified Architect: Libeskind**

**Daniel Libeskind** *‘Daniel Libeskind and the Contemporary Museum: New Jewish Architecture from Berlin to San Francisco’. Rizzoli International Publications, 2008. p63*

When I was invited by the Berlin Senate to participate in the 1988 competition for an extension to accommodate a Jewish department of the Stadtmuseum Berlin, I felt that this was not a program I had to invent, but one in which I was implicated from the beginning, having been born only a few hundred kilometres east of Berlin in Lodz, Poland, and having lost most of my family in the Holocaust. “Between the Lines” is the name I gave the project, because it is about two lines of thinking, organisation, and relationship. One is a straight line, broken into many fragments, the other a tortuous line, continuing indefinitely.

The site was in the old centre of Berlin, which has once again become the centre. The Stadtmuseum was housed in the Baroque Kollegienhaus on Lindenstrasse (1734-35), commissioned by Friedrich Wilhelm I as the first Prussian Court of Justice and renovated in the 1960s as a museum for the City of Berlin. In approaching the site, although it was an actual, physical place, I understood it as an invisible matrix of connections, of entwined relationships between the figures of Germans and the figures of Jews. This idea led to the fourfold structure of the project and which ultimately led to a transformation of the existing museum: the entire complex is known today as the Jewish Museum Berlin.

Considering that the competition was staged a year before the Berlin Wall came down, I felt there was a feature common to both East and West Berlin which bound them together: the relationship of Germans to Jews. Workers, writers, composers, artists, scientists and poets have forged a link between Jewish tradition and German culture. I used this connection to plot an irrational matrix that yielded references to the emblematic image of a compressed and distorted star - the yellow star that was so frequently worn on this very site. The zigzagging form of the distorted star was the first aspect of the project.

I have always been interested in the music of Arnold Schoneberg and, in particular, his Berlin period. In Schoneberg’s greatest work, the opera *Moses and Aaron,* the logic of the libretto could not be completed by the musical score. At the end, Moses doesn’t sing, he merely speaks “Oh Word, thou Word” addressing the absence of the Word. We understand it as text, because when the singing stops, Moses utters the missing Word, the call of the Word, the call of the Deed. With the project for a Jewish museum in berlin, I sought to complete Schoneberg’s opera architecturally. That was the second aspect of the project.

The third aspect was my interest in the names of those who were deported from Berlin during the fatal years of the Holocaust. I asked for, and received from the government in Bonn, two very large volumes called the Gedenkbuch. They contain names, page after page after page of names, dates of birth, dates of deportation, and presumed places where these people were murdered. I looked for the names of the Berliners and where they had died - in Riga, in the Lodz ghetto, in the concentration camps.

The fourth aspect of the project was inspired by Walter Benjamin’s “One-Way Street”, first published in 1928. The “60 Denkbilder”, or “sketches” that figure Benjamin’s urban apocalypse became the basis for the sequence of 60 sections along the zigzagging plan of new museum building, each of which represents one of the “Stations of the Star” described in his text.

The new building is entered through the Kollegienhaus, where just inside the main entrance a void reaches from the roof of the existing Baroque building to the underground. The void contains a stair that descends beneath the existing foundations and connects to the new building above, preserving the contradictory autonomy of both and permanently binding the two together.

The descent leads to three underground axial routes, each of which tells a different story. The first and longest traces a path leading to the Stair of Continuity, then up to and through the exhibition spaces of the museum, emphasising the continuum of history. The second leads out of the building and into the E.T.A. Hoffmann Garden of Exile and Emigration, remembering those who were forced to leave Berlin. The third leads to a dead end - the Holocaust Void. Cutting though the zigzagging plan of the new building is a void space that embodies absence, a straight line whose impenetrability becomes the central focus around which exhibitions are organised. In order to move from one side of the museum to the other, visitors must cross one of the 30 bridges that open onto this void.

The project for the museum posed questions that were relevant not only to architecture, but to all humanity. To this end, I sought to create a new architecture for a time that would reflect a new understanding of history, museums and the relationship between program and architectural space. The work is conceived as a museum for all Berliners, for all citizens - not only those of the present, but those of the future who might find their heritage and hope in this place. With its emphasis on the Jewish dimension of Berlin’s history, the building gives voice to a common fate - to the contradictions of the ordered and disordered, the chosen and not chosen, the vocal and the silent.

[**Herbert MUSCHAMP**](https://www.nytimes.com/by/herbert-muschamp)*Balancing Reason and Emotion in Twin Towers Void* ***New York Times*** FEB. 6 2003<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/06/arts/balancing-reason-and-emotion-in-twin-towers-void.html>

Daniel Libeskind's project for the World Trade Center site is a startlingly aggressive tour de force, a war memorial to a looming conflict that has scarcely begun. The Think team's proposal, on the other hand, offers an image of peacetime aspirations so idealistic as to seem nearly unrealizable.

While no pacifist, as a modern-day New Yorker I would like to think my way to a place beyond armed combat. The Think project accomplishes this. As I observed in an appraisal last week, the design -- by the architects Frederic Schwartz, Rafael Viñoly, Ken Smith and Shigeru Ban -- is an act of metamorphosis. It transforms our collective memories of the twin towers into a soaring affirmation of American values….

Compared with Think's proposal, Mr. Libeskind's design looks stunted. Had the competition been intended to capture the fractured state of shock felt soon after 9/11, this plan would probably deserve first place. But why, after all, should a large piece of Manhattan be permanently dedicated to an artistic representation of enemy assault? It is an astonishingly tasteless idea. It has produced a predictably kitsch result.

Mr. Libeskind's Berlin-based firm, Studio Daniel Libeskind, has not produced an abstract geometric composition. It is an emotionally manipulative exercise in visual codes. A concrete pit is equated with the Constitution. A skyscraper tops off at 1,776 feet. As at Abu Simbel, the Egyptian temple, the play of sunlight is used to give a cosmic slant to worldly history. A promenade of heroes confers quasi-military status on uniformed personnel.

Even in peacetime that design would appear demagogic. As this nation prepares to send troops into battle, the design's message seems even more loaded. Unintentionally, the plan embodies the Orwellian condition America's detractors accuse us of embracing: perpetual war for perpetual peace.

Yet Mr. Libeskind's design has proved surprisingly popular. Its admirers include many culturally informed New Yorkers. With its jagged skyline and sunken ground plane, the project does make a graphically powerful first impression. Formally, at least, it represents the furthest possible extreme from the six insipid designs released by the development corporation in July.

The contrast is surely part of the appeal of Mr. Libeskind's design. Those who rejected the earlier designs because of their blandness cannot accuse Mr. Libeskind's concept of wanting to fade into the background of Lower Manhattan. Isn't his design precisely what some of us were seeking? A vision that did not attempt to bury the trauma of 9/11 in sweet images of strolling shoppers and Art Deco spires?

And yet the longer I study Mr. Libeskind's design, the more it comes to resemble the blandest of all the projects unveiled in the recent design study: the retro vision put forth by the New Urbanist designers Peterson Littenberg. Both projects trade on sentimental appeal at the expense of historical awareness. Both offer visions of innocence -- nostalgia, actually.

Peterson Littenberg is nostalgic for Art Deco Manhattan circa 1928, before the stock market crash caused the United States to abandon the prevailing ideology of social Darwinism. Mr. Libeskind's plan is nostalgic for the world of pre-Enlightenment Europe, before religion was exiled from the public realm….

In recent decades, memorial architecture has taken up an increasing share of public life and space. Since 1982, with the stunning public response to Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, memorial architecture has emerged as a branch of industry. Through it, quasi-religious sentiment has gained a socially sanctioned place within the public realm.

Like other institutions in civil society, memorialization is vulnerable to political pressure. What and how we remember are not neutral, self-evident propositions. They are debates. Their outcome is often susceptible to manipulation by those in power.

This should be a reminder of why the religious and civil spheres were separated in the first place by Enlightenment thinkers. In medieval society, the power of religious faith was customarily exploited for political gain. In modern society, political actions are held accountable to reason.

The issue is one of proportion, in time as well as space. Boundaries must be placed around grief lest it overwhelm our ability to gain new perceptions. We do not embrace reason at the expense of emotion. We embrace it at the expense of self-deception.

1. A Controversial Monument, *The Times,* 29th October 1925. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Manchester Guardian,* 19th October 1925. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. A Great War Memorial, *Evening Standard,*15th October 1925 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. F. Haskell, “*Chios, the Massacres, and Delacroix”*. In Chios. A Conference at the Homereion in Chios, 1984, ed. J. Boardman and C.E. Vaphopoulos-Richardson. Oxford: 1986. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The Salon of 1824 was remarkable in the range and variety of exhibits and in the calibre of work on display.

The Massacres of Chios... was the most controversial of all but Delacroix also showed other significant works including the beautiful preparatory study entitled ‘Girl in a Cemetery’, and his famous ‘Tasso in the Madhouse’ and several paintings based on Byron’s poem ‘*The Giaour*’. Delacroix’s greatest rival at the time, Jean-August-Dominique Ingres, showed his ‘Vow of Louis XIII’, to great acclaim. “..next to the works of Ingres and of Delacroix, the exhibits of the English produced the greatest sensation” (Friedlaender 1972:114). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. F. Haskell, “Chios, the Massacres, and Delacroix”, 1986: 350. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See Friedlaender, David to Delacroix, 1972:3–6. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Haskell: 1986:357–358. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)